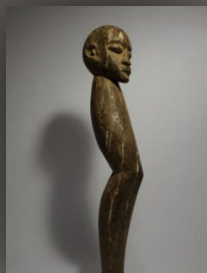




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The Choice of Wood



thriller

horror

drama

42 5 4

Chapter 1 by intellikat

As a young man he was fairly unremarkable. He was quiet, though observant. Not at all withdrawn in this. Those who had classes with him then said he kept to himself but was clearly intelligent. There was nothing about him that should have lingered in one's memory so many years later, except for his one apparent hobby.

He spent much time in the art department after hours, using band saw and belt sander to craft what looked to be tiny idols or icons from spent wood collected from about campus. A section of two-by from the library construction site. A branch from an oak by the commons. A bit of rotted fencing.

It was strange; it was curious. They were all beautifully crafted. No larger than a clenched fist when finished. It was fascinating how detailed he was able to get his tiny creations with just the two rough tools.

Then one night, just before the spring term had ended, I found one of his idols sitting outside on my windowsill.

[Chapter 2 by Luke Meyers](#)[See more of Story Wars](#)

It was ugly, hideous even. I found it in the dark, under the bed, for some reason like a person with a guilty secret. Inside I didn't know why, but I didn't want any other person to see this, to know that I had it.

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I regarded it, turned it over in my hands. I didn't doubt it was freshly carved, but the surfaces felt smooth and worn as if it were a century old. There was something permanent about its presence. Its twisted, accusatory scowl haunted me when I beheld it, even more so when I turned away.

I tried putting it down. The second I set it on my desk, I felt an absence. I was disconnected, somehow. Or unsafe, like I couldn't trust it if I took my eyes away. I knew it was silly, but I reflexively snatched up the strange ornament and brought it close. As soon as I held it, I felt more comfortable. Actually, I felt better than comfortable. Though the figurine filled me with sickening unease, I also felt myself filling with a sense of detached confidence. The world seemed better, and I felt the urge to get out into it and try on this new perspective.

I opened my door and stepped outside, automatically slipping the statuette into my jacket pocket as I departed.

Chapter 3 by Marouk



Slowly I've become conscious that my steps looked way too similar, one to another, until I realized that I didn't really know where I was going. Out! Into the open! that's where I wanted to go, but for what reason, I couldn't say.

There was nothing interesting to see around me. The breeze, I've decided to listen to the breeze as I walk and see where I end up.

Images changed in front of my eyes. I couldn't say that I was actively thinking. Instead I had random images that I decided, would be fine to observe. Now and then a wicked image would come up, and I wondered, where have I seen anything similar to this? Small silver bells hanging around someone's neck, woman's neck with long chestnut hair, hanging on a strap of leather, a knife making circles over a piece of bread for no apparent reason, whispering while this happens, ripe wheat swaying in a breeze in the afternoon sun, still alive and uncut, blood spilling from a goose on the ground, happy female voices, someone laughing and yelling that lunch will

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I've looked around, feeling uneasy. It felt like the wind just whispered.

"Fa...lar spirit.....ngth of my art..."

The words; I've definitely heard some words!

My feet stopped and I knew that it wasn't my decision but I did it anyway.

"Familiar spirit, ward and way-shower, fly swift unseen"

- "Hello??"

"Familiar spirit, come now as the Master would have you..."

The suffocating! And instead of grabbing toward my neck, I grabbed the little wooden statue in my pocket to be able to breathe again. But the world turned dark and my body gave in and I just fell to the ground.

Chapter 4 by intellikat



When I woke, I felt my head spin.

I looked up at the dark ceiling above, only to realize it was the floor below, while I was tied tightly to some kind of apparatus build into the roof of what I at first thought of as a temple or site of ancient worship.

The small door to the chamber opened, and a woman with chestnut hair entered. I immediately saw the small bells dangling from her neck and remembered my previous visions.

The woman had a fresh loaf of golden bread on a silver tray, and placed this on a dais directly beneath me. From a leather sheath she lifted a flashing knife and began to move it in rhythmic motions over the bread, something low and indistinct muttered from her mouth. In the next moment, the bread ignited into flame and began to be consumed. I tried to wriggle from the ropes that bound me, but they were too tight.

The women heard my movements and looked up, almost surprised to see me.

And then, to my surprise, the woman crossed the room and stepped onto the side wall,

continuing to move in a straight line toward me. When she reached what I thought of as the ceiling, she stepped onto this as if it were the floor. She looked down at me, wearing some kind of heavy boots I had not noticed before.

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And then I realized we were in zero gravity.

Write a draft for chapter 5 of 8

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